

## When and where to receive care

Knowing where to go for medical care can save you time, money—and possibly your life. Use this guide to help decide whether to schedule an appointment, visit urgent care or go to the emergency room.

### Primary care



#### Best choice for:

- Routine checkups and preventive care
- Managing chronic illnesses like diabetes or high blood pressure
- Mild illnesses like sore throat, cough or low-grade fever
- Non-urgent health concerns like skin rash or minor aches
- Minor injuries
- Vaccinations and wellness screenings

#### When to go:

- During office hours with an appointment
- When you need a referral or ongoing care management
- When you need medication refills

### Urgent care

Choose urgent care for symptoms that need attention quickly but aren't life-threatening. It's a good option after hours or when your primary care provider isn't available.

#### You can often be in and out in under an hour for:

- Minor fractures, sprains, strains and other injuries
- Common infections (like ear, sinus or urinary tract infections)
- Moderate dehydration
- Rashes or skin irritation
- Minor cuts and burns that may need stitches or a dressing
- Cold and flu symptoms
- Cough or sore throat
- Fever
- Minor allergic reactions that don't involve trouble breathing
- Minor work injuries
- Sports injuries
- Sports physicals
- Abdominal, back or muscle pain
- Most animal and insect bites
- Asthma symptoms
- Pink eye



### Emergency room

Go to the emergency room for symptoms that may be life-threatening or need advanced care right away.

**Call 911** if you are having a medical emergency or can't drive safely. Paramedics can begin treatment on the way to the hospital—this is especially important for symptoms of a heart attack or stroke.

#### Go to the ER for:

- Severe trauma, (such as injuries from a car accident, fall or gunshot wound)
- Stroke symptoms (sudden weakness, numbness or slurred speech)
- Chest pain, pressure or signs of a heart attack
- Sudden changes in vision
- Confusion or disorientation
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure
- Overdose or poisoning
- Coughing up blood
- Severe allergic reactions
- Severe bleeding
- Fractures where the bone breaks through the skin
- Severe burns or cuts
- Sudden, severe pain
- Snake bites
- Fever over 103°F with a rash
- Severe vomiting lasting more than 24 hours
- Head injuries, concussions or other trauma
- Vaginal bleeding during pregnancy
- Urgent concerns involving a baby under 3 months old
- Mental health crises
- Anytime your instincts tell you it's serious

